

Washington, DC -- During yesterday's meeting of the Highways and Transit subcommittee, U.S. Representative Michael Arcuri (D-Utica) made opening remarks and heard testimony on the state of our nation's transportation infrastructure. Arcuri highlighted the importance of improving transportation systems and recognizing that doing so will promote economic growth and development in Upstate New York.

"The creation of high-quality transportation networks in areas with struggling local economies will spur increased opportunities for private investment and economic development," said Arcuri. "I have first-hand knowledge of what some of these budding economies are like -- there are many cities in my Upstate New York district that have been plagued by a lack of substantial funding to repair aging roadways and in turn continue to lack economic growth."

The Highways and Transit subcommittee heard testimony from representatives of the U.S. Department of Transportation, the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission, and transportation experts. The testimony centered on how our nation's surface transportation system will need to change to support an ever-changing economy.

A copy of Arcuri's opening remarks is attached below:

U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24)

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit: "Transportation System: Challenges of the Future"

Opening Remarks

January 24, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am extremely pleased to serve on this Subcommittee under your leadership and in the company of my distinguished colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

There are serious challenges facing our communities with regard to economic development, and it is necessary that we address these challenges by assessing some of the root causes. The state of our nation's roadways and transportation infrastructure is deplorable in some regions and it manifests itself quite often in some of the most economically depressed areas of the country.

Why is that so? Because time and again, throughout our Nation's history, we have seen that the key to economic growth is the ability to transport goods and services in a quick and efficient manner.

The logic is simple – the creation of high-quality transportation networks in areas with struggling local economies will spur increased opportunities for private investment and economic development. I have first-hand knowledge of what some of these budding economies are like -- there are many cities in my Upstate New York district that have been plagued by a lack of substantial funding to repair aging roadways and in turn continue to lack economic growth. Even though there are areas of the country that may exert greater demands on the system as a whole, it is of the utmost importance to not let that need overshadow the unmet need for additional investment in other areas.

I look forward to hearing testimony from the witnesses here with us today.

Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.

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